



## State of Utah

### Department of Natural Resources

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#### NEWS RELEASE

June 16, 2006

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### **STEWARDS OF UTAH'S OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT MARK 50 YEARS**

#### **Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining To Note Anniversary at Vernal Open House**

The Oil and Gas Program within the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining will celebrate 50 years as a State agency responsible for oil and gas development. The milestone will be commemorated during an open house at the Utah Field House of Natural History State Museum, 496 East Main Street, Vernal, Utah, on Monday, June 26th from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

As part of its celebration the division is taking note of fifteen counties throughout the state that have contributed in some manner to the development of Utah's oil and gas industry. Certificates have been mailed to County Commissions in each of those counties noting their individual contributions from Utah's first oil well in Grand County in 1891 to a major new oil discovery in Sevier County in 2004.

The Utah Oil and Gas Commission, now the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, was created in 1955 to ensure the ultimate recovery of resources while protecting the public interest. The Division now has a three-fold mission of promoting the exploration, development and conservation of oil and natural gas resources; fostering a fair economic return to the general public for those resources; and maintaining sound, reasonable oversight to ensure environmentally acceptable activities.

"The newly created Oil and Gas Conservation Commission issued its first permit in October of 1955," said Gil Hunt, associate director for oil and gas. "Since that time we have now issued permits for thousands of wells throughout the state, and in the last year established a new record for permits in a single year of more than 1,600."

It was in 1967 that lawmakers transformed the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission into the Division of Oil, Gas Conservation as a new subdivision of the Department of Natural Resources. In 1975 the name was changed to the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining when it was given responsibility for mined land

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reclamation. The division has since taken on the responsibility of environmental oversight for Utah's coal mining industry and also jurisdiction over underground injection of fluids related to oil and gas operations.

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